

REPORT OF MEETING OF NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF
CHILDREN AND YOUTH SERVING AGENCIES, JUNE
14, 1972 AT THE AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR THE
BLIND.

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REPORT OF MEETING OF
NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH SERVING AGENCIES

June 14, 1972

at the

American Foundation for the Blind
15 West 16th Street
New York, New York 10011

Polly Thomson Room

Present: Dr. John W. Banning, Program Leader, 4-H Youth, U.S.
Department of Agriculture Extension Service
Mrs. M. Robert Barnett, Program Specialist, Program
Department, Girl Scouts of the U.S.A.
Mr. Carl J. Davis, President, Association for Education
of the Visually Handicapped
Mr. Gilbert Field, Public Relations Director, Recording
for the Blind, Inc.
Miss June Hammond, Program Director, Girls' Clubs of
America, Inc.
Miss Marjorie Hooper, Braille Editor, American Printing
House for the Blind
Miss Nancy Hughes, Program Advisor, Program Develop-
ment Department, Camp Fire Girls
Mr. Lucien H. Rice, Director, Scouting for the Handicapped,
Boy Scouts of America
Miss Mary Jack Wintle, Assistant Chief for Acquisitions,
Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped,
Library of Congress

Staff members, American Foundation for the Blind:

Mr. M. Robert Barnett, Executive Director
Miss Mary Ellen Mulholland, Director, Publications Division
Miss Beth J. Phillips, Specialist in Professional Preparation
and Training, Program Development Division
Miss Marion V. Wurster, Director, Program Development
Division

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Mr. M. Robert Barnett, Executive Director, AFB opened the meeting at 9:45 a. m. and welcomed the group to the Foundation. He expressed appreciation of interest in coming and the respective organization's commitment to visually handicapped youth. He reviewed in brief the history of the committee and its November 1970 recommendation that a pilot project be planned to demonstrate how generalized and specialized youth serving organizations could cooperate in planning and training at the local level. A planning committee of the group met in March 1971 and drafted a proposal for a one day workshop for program staff and leaders of youth serving agencies.

AFB Demonstration Workshop

The recommended workshop was held by AFB in Atlanta, Georgia on March 1, 1972 and proceedings sent to all participants and members of the National Committee. Mr. Barnett then called upon AFB staff for further comments on the report of the workshop and future plans. Miss Beth Phillips, Specialist in Professional Preparation and Training, Program Development Division, reviewed the procedure followed in forming the local planning committee and inviting participants. A total of twenty-two agencies and organizations had been invited to attend and, of these, sixteen were represented at the meeting. Copies of the announcement sent out and a listing of the organizations and agencies invited, quotas assigned, preregistrations received and number of representatives attending the workshop were distributed. A total of ninety-nine persons were registered, but head count taken during the meeting indicated that there were more than one hundred and ten persons in attendance.

Highlights of the meeting were reviewed and the valuable contribution of the blind and sighted youth who participated in the panel presentation and in the discussion groups was emphasized. Evaluation questionnaires had been completed by sixty-one participants and all except three persons indicated that the workshop had been a learning experience for them. A detailed summary of the comments and suggestions for future workshops received from the participants was distributed. In the cross sharing of information about programs and resources, some fears had been dispelled and it is hoped that there will be follow-up activities in the community. A complete list of participants and their addresses has been compiled and sent to those persons involved in planning the final program and to others who had requested it.



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Miss Marion Wurster, Director, Program Development Division informed the group that a proposal had been submitted for additional workshops on the local level in other regions of the country during the next budget year, but whether or not the proposal will be accepted was not yet known.

Miss Mary Ellen Mulholland, Director, Publications Division described the content of a fifteen to twenty page publication being prepared for local leaders of youth groups. This will include basic information about blindness, how to prepare for, and integrate, a visually handicapped child into the activities of the group, resources and publications available. It is anticipated that this booklet will be available for distribution in August. The usual press releases and distribution of copies to persons and agencies on AFB's routine mailing list will be made.

A discussion followed about ways of getting this material to the local leaders. Miss Hughes indicated that she would like to make an extensive mailing to Camp Fire Leaders. Others present indicated that distribution could be made through regular mailings of their organizations. The National Recreation and Parks Association was suggested as another avenue. Blurbs or announcements in organization magazines etc. would alert the general membership to the availability of the publication.

Following discussion of the Atlanta Workshop and AFB's publication plans, the chairman, Mr. Barnett invited members of the committee to describe and make such comments as they desired about the activities and plans of their respective organizations.

Association for Education of the Visually Handicapped

Mr. Carl Davis, President reported that as an outgrowth of discussions of the committee that AEVH had tried a similar effort in the San Francisco Bay area. An initial planning meeting was held in December and a local planning committee appointed. The pilot program was held at the YMCA, Berkeley, California on April 8, 1972. Invitations to attend were extended, through school and agency personnel, to visually handicapped youth in Marin and Alameda Counties. This half day program included a short talk, an opportunity for youth to talk on an individual basis with representatives of Camp Fire Girls, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, YMCA, YWCA, 4-H Clubs and others about activities available and those desired. Three young people spoke to the group about their experiences in Boy or Girl Scouting. This was a direct recruitment effort. AEVH plans to make a determined effort during the coming year to encourage teaching personnel

to stimulate interest in the communities they serve. One itinerant teacher in the San Francisco area has been instrumental in the development of recreational programs.

Boy Scouts of America

Mr. Lucien Rice, Director, Scouting for the Handicapped advised the group that a revised edition of the Scout Handbook has been published and that it will be made available in braille, large type, on records and cassettes. The Exploring magazine is to be done in braille and a manual on scouting for the deaf will be available for distribution in September. Other publications of interest are: guidelines for the adaptation of camp facilities for the handicapped and guidelines on how to conduct camporees for handicapped scouts. The film strip, On the Road to Light - Let None Be Left Behind has been completed and a copy has been sent to all the Boy Scout Councils.

Current membership includes 175,000 handicapped scouts. Professional positions for staff working specifically with handicapped scouts have now been approved. A workshop on scouting for the handicapped is being held at Philmont Scout Ranch, New Mexico July 19th - 25th and a weekend course for scouters and volunteers concerning working with the handicapped is being planned for November 4th and 5th. Although there are many troops specifically for handicapped boys, Scouts also encourage integration into regular troops.

Recording for the Blind

Mr. Gilbert Field, Public Relations Director reported that there are now over 19,000 text books in their master tape library and that they are serving over 90% of the college students who are visually handicapped and 50% of the high school students. They are interested in reaching more high school students, particularly those who are perceptually handicapped. Circulation has increased over 100% in the past four years. A new 8 track variable speed cassette unit with which the student can move the tape back and forth is now available. Recordings made are exclusively educational materials for high school, college and post college level and titles are recorded at the request of the individual student.

Camp Fire Girls

Miss Nancy Hughes, Program Advisor, Program Development Department, distributed copies of a new publication, Leaders of Handicapped Girls.

This guide was developed by a 1971 Program Intern and contains several references to visually handicapped girls. Operation Birthright, a booklet developed with The National Foundation, suggests projects for youth and includes blindness as one of the birth defects. Camp Fire Girls' basic program handbooks are available in braille editions. The Discovery level book has been revised and the Blue Bird is now being redone. Braille editions of these are not yet available. The organization's magazine for teenagers, Today's Girl, is not currently available in braille or recorded form. Although there are Camp Fire Girls who are blind, headquarters does not have information concerning the total number. Some special groups have been formed but most handicapped girls are in the regular troops.

Library of Congress, Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped

Miss Mary Jack Wintle, Assistant Chief for Acquisitions indicated that the Library is considering recording magazines for teenagers and that the American Girl might be considered. A consulting advisory committee concerned with interests of children and youth will meet November 3rd and 4th, 1972. Mrs. Catherine Wires in the Selection Section is responsible for the selection of publications for children and youth and publications may be submitted to her for consideration at any time. Library books are available in records, book record combinations, twin vision and acetate, four track tape cassettes, and flexible discs. A flexible disc book is a recent innovation which keeps the records attached and in order and is readily mailed. The question was raised whether or not the Library would consider recording Boys' Life and there was discussion of which type of reproduction braille readers would prefer and how the greatest number of handicapped persons, including those with dyslexia, could be best served.

4-H Clubs

Dr. John Banning, Program Leader 4-H Youth, U.S. Department of Agriculture Extension Service indicated that Mrs. Fern Kelley was the program leader on their staff who had responsibility for giving leadership nationally to programming for the handicapped. In an effort to improve the competency of professionals in work with the handicapped, a national training workshop was held in Minnesota this spring.

4-H's on-going Seeing Eye Dog project was recently publicized on a TV Disneyland program series. Visually handicapped have been among the

persons invited to camps and workshops to help the youth feel more comfortable with the handicapped. 4-H programs are work-oriented and there is need for opportunity for the youth to be of service. Some have gone to homes of older handicapped people and helped in many ways. Career exploration is part of the overall program and leadership development and nutrition are being emphasized in inner city programs.

Girls' Clubs of America

Miss June Hammond, Program Director expressed her feelings as a learner with the group. She stated that intensive program development at the national level had been initiated only a year ago. Structurally they are closely related to the Boys Clubs. She was hopeful that the workshop in Atlanta might provide impetus for the development of a project in Georgia.

American Printing House for the Blind

Miss Marjorie Hooper, Braille Editor reported that they had had more call for large type books than braille and that the number of requests for talking books is disappointing.

APH publishes scouting materials but there is not much demand for them. She commented that the public schools do not appear to know what is available and it was suggested that more information might be provided through the Council for Exceptional Children. For the benefit of the new members of the committee, the quota system was reviewed.

Girl Scouts of America

Mrs. Marian Barnett, Program Specialist, Program Department, reported that since fall, the Program Department had been working on a program change study. Models for testing had been developed and a trial run will be made this summer. The anticipated study of handicapped girls had bogged down for this and other reasons. There are approximately 20-25,000 handicapped girls in Girl Scouting but how many of these have visual handicaps is not known. The leaders guide, Handicapped Girls in Scouting, has been reprinted without any major changes. It may be revised in approximately five years.

Future Plans

Following the Round Robin reports, Mr. Barnett called upon Miss Wurster concerning future plans for the committee. She described the role of AFB as being that of a catalytic agent and expressed interest in what had been accomplished through group meetings over the years. She then asked the group if the meeting served a useful purpose for them: should meetings be continued?; should the committee be broadened to include other agencies?

There was general consensus that it was worthwhile to meet to share information. It was suggested that other youth organizations be contacted by staff to find out if they were interested. Such other organizations as Salvation Army, Junior Achievement, J.C.'s, Big Brother, C.Y.O. and other church related groups were suggested. Contact should be made in person rather than by letter or phone in order that the degree of interest and extent of activities can be determined. It was pointed out that if the interest of the committee becomes too broad in scope it may lose its usefulness.

It was also suggested that a national training workshop might be held to which key people were invited to come at their own expense. In general, the members of the committee felt that there was need to get to the practitioners and there was general agreement that the idea of regional meetings to train trainers should be pursued.

There was general consensus that the committee be called together again in the spring of 1973 and the group was invited to meet at BSA Schiff Reservation, New Jersey or 4-H headquarters, Washington, D.C. AFB staff will contact members of the committee the first of the year to determine place and date for the meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 2 p.m.

BJP:ls
6/26/72
Enclosure

	Announcements <u>sent</u>	<u>Preregistration</u>	<u>Attendance</u>
Boys' Clubs	20	13	7
Boy Scouts	20	4	1
Camp Fire	15	3	1
Easter Seal	5	–	2
4-H	5	5	4
Girls' Clubs	20	2	1
Girl Scouts	20	7	7
Red Cross	5	5	–
Salvation Army	5	–	–
YMCA	15	–	–
YWCA	15	–	2
Atlanta Libraries	5	5	4
Atlanta Public Schools	20	22	18
Atlanta Parks & Recreation	20	26	19
Georgia State University	5	2	2
Robert Shaw Center	3	2	2
Community Council	5	1	–
Academy for the Blind	3	3	3
Metro Association f/t Blind	2	2	–
Community Services f/t Blind	2	3	–
Recording for the Blind	1	1	1
Foundation for Visually Hand. Children	2	2	2
Individuals	10	8	8
Program participants & staff	<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>15</u>
Total	223	117	99

<u>Has This Workshop Been a Learning Experience for You?</u>	Yes	58
<u>If So, To What Extent? If Not, Why Not?</u>	No	3
	Total	61

- 10 Great experience - great help - a real eye opener - stimulated thought
- 12 Heretofore not knowledgeable in this area - no previous experience - first opportunity to learn about visually handicapped - dispelled many myths I had about blind people - can be included in many areas of our daily lives - I had a big question mark in my mind, What do blind people do if they can't see to do the many things sighted do?
- 11 Learned more - gave me more specific ideas - reinforced knowledge - increased my understanding - already familiar with most of material
- 1 I would like to know more
- 4 Nothing presented that was new to me - repeated past information
- 8 Blind persons should be accepted as individuals - treated like anyone else - not as dependent as people think - not to be pitied - should be encouraged to perform to their fullest capacity - sighted persons are just as responsible for making friends as sighted people
- 7 What blind persons can do, just about anything with intelligent help - can participate as others with some limitations - integrate into group activities as normally as possible
- 7 How to be more comfortable with blind persons - what one should or should not do
- 10 Direct information from the teenagers concerning their feelings and reactions - being able to talk with them - the frank panel discussion - their views were invaluable in giving some insight into the problems involved
- 9 More about attitudes of both sighted and unsighted - problems and need of social acceptance - that the sighted want to help - of the deep interest of so many
- 3 Materials available
- 10 Existing resources and where to find help
- 4 Excellent film
- 3 Demonstration
- 5 The exchange of ideas and opportunity to discuss specific questions - hear of experiences of different kinds - meeting other youth agency people - talking with professionals in the field

It tells me that we are not in contact with these children and should do something

about it

Discovering personnel related to education of the blind outside of the school system

Finding agency representatives willing to involve themselves has been stimulating

Didn't realize organizations were as uninformed regarding handicapped children nor their place in the Atlanta Public Schools

It was revealing to learn some of the feelings of the blind and their reactions to sighted persons and their relationships with them. I think if we could explore this further, we might be able to come up with answers of dealing with each other. Too often, we have done what the sighted person has felt best to do.

I would have liked more emphasis on the social needs of the visually handicapped. Although this may be an integral part of recreation, the emphasis today seemed toward competitive participation - not on the social benefit possibly derived simply from inclusion in recreational activity

Being a resource teacher in the public schools, I was interested in the outside activities of the children

This has impressed upon me the necessity for my agency to become involved in the type of programs you are encouraging

Has It Supplied Answers to Some of Your Questions?	If so, to What Extent?	Yes	48
<u>What Questions Were Not Answered?</u>		No	2
Had none		2	
No response		9	

- 7
- Somewhat - a small extent - impossible to clarify all questions in one session - helpful
- 5
- Found out where to find further information and assistance and informed about resources to help initiate such a program
- 3
- Knowledge too limited to ask many questions - do not feel well enough informed to know what I can do
- 2
- How to reach out and get the handicapped for recreation program - we should do more to bring visually handicapped children into our recreation programs
- There are enough training programs to teach the handicapped how to be independent
- Given some suggestions for recreation
- Having the blind participate and tell their experiences answered some-I always wanted to know how they felt
- It helped me put things together that I didn't realize before (blind youth)
- The group discussion really reassured my feelings of hesitancy or doubts or fears about how much blind people can participate - safety precautions necessary, etc.
- The session provided valuable answers to questions raised by the group. The discussion stimulated questions and discussions especially in the area of the manner in which a blind and sighted have a relationship of mutual give and take
- How do I really feel about the blind?
- I still would like to see blind people accepted just as people and able to make on their own more intimate friends. Most of their close friends are also blind and they are not included in school dances, football games, etc.
- I would like to have access to more specific ways of working with the visually handicapped in the way of tools
- It would have been beneficial to have included in the groups exactly what specific action courses could be taken
- More blind persons should attend. We needed more interaction between sighted and blind

<u>Was There Sufficient Opportunity For Discussion?</u>	Yes	52
	No	3
	No re-	
	sponse	6

- 3

No - much too short - more time needed - time available well used - too broad as far as subject matter
- 2

Could have benefited more had there been a visually handicapped person in our small discussion group - more opportunity for discussion with blind persons

Yes - before with coffee, break time, lunch, discussion period, Now we can take the initiative and follow up with these people on our own

Yes - having the lunchroom right here so did not need to go out
- 2

Yes - panel and small discussion groups - small discussion groups are beneficial - cross sharing of information excellent - frank discussion cleared up many fears and doubts - panel good because of freedom of discussion

Yes - but most of the persons involved had previous contact with the visually handicapped and thus the need for attitudinal change was the primary topic of discussion

Would like the opportunity of talking with persons from more involved programs

If Future Institutes Are Held, What Suggestions Do You Have For Improvement of the Program?

- 13 No response
- 7 Include more blind adults - be sure to include the blind children - more blind people of varied ages
- 9 More specifics - more methods and procedures - more discussion of do's and don'ts to work with, understand and relate to them as individuals - more explanation of how to go about incorporating the blind into groups - more specific topics for discussion - too much rambling - how to plan for and organize recreation programs to integrate sighted and sightless - dig deeper into the how to's of initiating programs - more emphasis on training
- 4 More small groups for varied opinions and experience sharing
- 4 More demonstrations of different games and modified activities using blind and sighted
- 2 Try to get more people involved to learn - more people not associated with programs for the visually handicapped
- More discussion of resources, materials and organizations
- 2 A display table with more available material on resources and people in the community - a list - displays of public and private services
- Youth panel idea excellent - continue, excellent tool for teaching both sighted and unsighted
- Try some of the things we saw in the film
- Better sound system and movie projector operation
- Talk more about visually handicapped adults and everyday living
- 2 More time to accomplish more
- Future - full discussion of blindness and their involvement
- Establish discussion groups according to various interests in the visually impaired (AFB)
- 2 Have more films and skits - a film on teenage activities involving blind
- Different recreational settings in addition to camping and scouting which are not available to all children

Rooms for discussion so it will not be so noisy

More active participation from people experienced in this field

Mail more information in understandable terms to the people who are going to participate

Immediately after main speaker, open session for questions which have come about as a result of the speech

More detailed information about what particular agencies are doing with the blind

Panel should be longer to give panelists more opportunity to express themselves (blind youth)

We've got to get beyond theory and put it into practice (blind youth)

Further interaction with blind or partially seeing people would be helpful

One participant made the following suggestions:

1. More leadership places for "non-professionals"
2. Increase demonstrations using blind and sighted
3. Use one verbal, well adjusted totally blind who has integrated successfully
4. Find one or more fully sighted teenager who has been a part of a successful social or recreational activity to tell of his experience
5. Open conference with bold statements re: misconceptions, myths, and of generalizations of generally held sighted attitudes toward blindness - use this for shock effect
6. Then present goals and objectives, recognizing openly the problems involved in meaningful integration of blind and sighted

As an afterthought one blind participant wrote:

"When comparing the oral evaluation summaries with the #3 session in which I was involved, I feel very definitely that much of the spirit and content of the group sessions was sacrificed. This is not to say that the recorders did a poor job. What I am saying is that for future institutes, I strongly recommend that each group session be recorded on tape so that you or other leaders may study exactly what was said and select just those nuggets which are appropriate to the written report of the institute"

We Would Appreciate Any Additional Comments You May Have

38 No response

4 Very meaningful day - very interesting and informative - thank you - very enjoyable sharing of concerns

2 Film, panel and demonstration excellent
Film very good. Could it possibly be used as a "short" in a regular theatre?

The whole format, focus and content of the conference were excellent - this is the best conference on this subject that I have attended

Content, structure and physical aspects of the program were excellent

Well planned

Program excellent - learned a lot - hope there will be others in the future

More of these type workshops are needed - would help personnel in all careers

Good trend - include the blind in discussions about them (blind youth)

Liked the variety presented - lecture, film, panel, group discussion

Workshop was excellent - Miss Frye's introduction set a good tone, the movie should be seen by everyone in the community, and the panel and group discussion was invaluable

Everything was most informative except the keynote speaker - who talked more on the level of the educator and less the "how to's", etc. for the recreational director or youth worker

Need to have more panel and shorter discussion group. You can run it into the ground! (blind youth)

I learned more from the panel and discussion group than any lecture or reading book could ever do

Well organized - group recommendations should be followed up, especially the specific recommendations

Location good, timing good. Had thought ahead of time that a longer day was needed but timing today was excellent. Film said a lot. Liked participation of youth!

I was glad to see our discussion group run so well. So often this is where conferences of this type fall down. So much depends upon the discussion leader.

Should be open to more people not just to specific organizations. Everyone should know the information and knowledge that was gained here today.

I like the word "sightless" rather than "blind"

We need to talk more about the blind person's attitudes. I think it's important. This focus was good (blind youth)

Penny made a very fine point that the blind that have a talent should go on and be encouraged to get involved. People soon learn to accept them as average people (Delta Gamma)

I was impressed by the sense and feeling of the blind. How some have accepted the blindness and seem to accept it with a feeling they are blind and they can and they do just as well as sighted people

We should not pity the blind. We should accept them as they are. Stand by them and help when we are needed

I have really enjoyed this workshop. I have learned some of the needs of visually handicapped children and youth that I didn't know at all. It has really inspired me that I can understand the handicapped. Now I can share this with others and learn how to appreciate them more

It seemed we were batting around platitudes. We've got to get beyond theory and put it into practice (blind youth)

PARTICIPANTS

NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH SERVING AGENCIES

June 14, 1972 Meeting

Dr. John W. Banning, Program Leader
4-H Youth
U.S. Department of Agriculture Extension Service
Washington, D. C. 20250

Mrs. Marian Barnett, Program Specialist
Program Department
Girl Scouts of the U. S. A.
830 Third Avenue
New York, New York 10022

Mr. Carl J. Davis, President
Association for the Education of the Visually Handicapped
1604 Spruce Street
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103

Mr. Gilbert Field, Director of Public Relations
Recording for the Blind, Inc.
215 East 58th Street
New York, New York 10022

Miss June Hammond, Program Director
Girls' Clubs of America, Inc.
133 East 62nd Street
New York, New York 10021

Miss Marjorie Hooper, Braille Editor (representing
Mr. Finis E. Davis, Vice President and General
Manager)
American Printing House for the Blind
1839 Frankfort Avenue
Louisville, Kentucky 40206

Miss Nancy Hughes, Program Advisor
Program Development Department
Camp Fire Girls
1740 Broadway
New York, New York 10019

Mr. Lucien H. Rice, Director
Scouting for the Handicapped
Boy Scouts of America
New Brunswick, New Jersey 08902

Miss Mary Jack Wintle, Assistant Chief for Acquisitions
(representing Mr. Robert S. Bray, Chief)
Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped
Library of Congress
1291 Taylor Street, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20542

Unable to attend:

Mr. Carl R. Andrews, Assistant Director
National Program and Training Services
Boys' Clubs of America
771 First Avenue
New York, New York 10017

Mr. Robert Dye, Associate Executive Director
YMCA of the U. S. A.
291 Broadway
New York, New York 10007

Mr. Ross L. Huckins, Chairman, Youth Services
Association for the Education of the Visually Handicapped
3051 Benvenue Avenue
Berkeley, California 94705

Miss Frances James, Director
Youth Constituencies
YWCA of the U. S. A.
600 Lexington Avenue
New York, New York 10022

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AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR THE BLIND
15 WEST 16th STREET
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10011

